



For Immediate Release:
TOM BURCKHARDT | *HOW WE GOT INTO IT*

June 22 - August 6, 2023
Artist Reception: Thursday, June 22, 5-8PM

High Noon is pleased to present **Tom Burckhardt, *How We Got Into It***. For Burckhardt's first exhibition with the gallery, he will transform the space into a deconstructed grid consisting of 353 collaged found book pages which have been metabolized through his abstract vocabulary, creating an open system of visual and linguistic interpretation. To further this effect, Burckhardt will map a labyrinth of overlapping chalk lines on the walls that seem to track real or imagined connections between the works akin to a taxonomy chart or evidence board.

While primarily known for his painting practice which has spanned almost four decades, Burckhardt has also been working on book pages for roughly thirty years. As a painter, he is also a collagist, intersecting modalities of craft and mass production through a formalism that seats illogical patterns, structures, and planes within a pictorial space that becomes activated by a tenuous harmony.

Three years ago during lockdown, the titles— which he used to obscure— began to drive narrative content amidst the context of national politics and the pandemic era. Books from the 30s or 40s contained daunting phrases like, "Can Fascism Happen Here?" or, "The New Fear", welcoming the viewer to push the text into contemporary meanings. Chapter headings have a seductive, leading quality that allows the text threaded throughout the grid to become a sort of choose-your-own-adventure of refrigerator magnet poetry.

While the installation operates as an immersive whole, the works individually cut against the text, swamping and neutering it. The visuals are never quite in concert, never resolving or illustrating the text except in their disjunction. ***How We Got Into It*** recalls Burckhardt's 2010 exhibition at Tibor de Nagy entitled, *157 Elements of a Painting*, in which works created on book pages using left over oil paint were arranged on a wall like puzzle pieces, requiring the audience to mentally assemble a composition based upon almost-legible silhouettes and archetypes. ***How We Got Into It*** takes a more meta approach to book pages as both content and substrate, crafting non-linear narratives from the overlaps of language and design.

On going at the outdated books, Burckhardt considers them to be "fair game."

"Old books about art, the social landscape, or self-help books have great chapter headings," he explains, "But many don't have any currency now. This work destroys and rescues them at the same time, giving the ideas some juice in today's context."

Tom Burckhardt was born in New York City in 1964 and has spent his entire life living there. He graduated with a BFA in painting from SUNY Purchase in 1986 and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture that same year. He has been exhibiting since 1992 at various NYC galleries such as George Adams Gallery, Tibor De Nagy Gallery, Pierogi, and Car-en Golden Fine Art, and the Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco, CA. His most recent solo show of paintings was at George Adams Gallery NYC in January 2022. He participated in the 2016 Kochi Muziris Bienalle in Kerala, India and that installation piece, "Studio Flood" was shown at Pierogi Gallery, NYC in September 2017 and CMCA in Maine during Summer 2018. He was an artist in residence at Yaddo Foundation in New York State in January 2019 and at Pepper House, Kochi, India, in January 2020. He was a resident faculty at Skowhegan in 2007 and currently teaches part time at SUNY Purchase.